

CLAIMS

1. A soap composition comprising in the range from 60 to 99% by weight of the composition of a mixture of (i) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids, and (ii) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids, both based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition.
2. A soap composition according to claim 1 comprising 25 to 75% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C₈-C₂₄, preferably C₁₂-C₂₂, fatty acids.
3. A soap composition according to either one of claims 1 and 2 comprising 25 to 75% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched chain C₈-C₂₄, preferably C₁₂-C₂₂, fatty acids.
4. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the alkali metal soap straight chain fatty acids comprise greater than 80% by weight of C₁₂-C₁₈ fatty acids.
5. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the alkali metal soap straight chain fatty acids comprise in the range from 55 to 90% by weight of C₁₆-C₁₈ fatty acids.
6. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the alkali metal soap branched chain fatty acids comprise greater than 70% by weight of C₁₆-C₂₂ fatty acids.
7. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the branched chain fatty acids comprise isostearic acid.
8. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the straight chain fatty acids are derived from palm kernel oil and palm oil.

9. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims comprising less than 10% by weight of alkali metal soap of unsaturated fatty acids, based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition.
- 5 10. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims comprising substantially no additional stabilizer and/or preservative and/or chelating agent.
- 10 11. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims having a colour stability of greater than 50%.
12. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims having an odour stability of greater than 50%.
- 15 13. A soap composition according to any one of the preceding claims in the form of a soap tablet or bar.
14. A process of making a soap bar or tablet which comprises extruding a soap composition comprising in the range from 70 to 95% by weight of the composition of a mixture of (i) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids, and (ii) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids, both based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition.
- 20 15. A soap tablet or bar comprising in the range from (a) 70 to 95% by weight of a mixture of (i) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of straight chain C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids, and (ii) 20 to 80% by weight of alkali metal soap of branched C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids, both based on the total weight of alkali metal soaps in the composition, (b) 0 to 5% by weight of free fatty acids, (c) 0.1 to 1% by weight of salt, and (d) 5 to 20% by weight of water, and (e) 0.1 to 2% by weight of polyol.
- 30 16. A soap tablet or bar according to claim 15 having at least one or more, and preferably all, of (i) a total mush value in the range from 5 to 25 g/50 cm², (ii) a lather volume in the range from 60 to 150 ml, (iii) a colour stability in the range from 70 to 95%, and (iv) an odour stability of greater than 70%.

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17. The use of alkali metal soap of branched C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids to improve the colour stability and/or odour stability and/or lather volume of a soap composition.

18. The use of alkali metal soap of branched C₈-C₂₄ fatty acids to reduce the
5 amount of stabilizer and/or preservative and/or chelating agent required in a soap composition.

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